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Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

5423rd meeting

Tuesday, 25 April 2006, 1.20 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Guangya	(China)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Greece	Mrs. Telalian
	Japan	Mr. Kitaoka
	Peru	Mr. De Rivero
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

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06-32576 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 1.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/255, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Denmark, France, Japan, Peru, Slovakia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Congo, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Peru, Slovakia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Qatar, Russian Federation

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The draft resolution received 12 votes in favour, none against and three abstentions. The resolution has been adopted as resolution 1672 (2006).

I shall now give the floor to those members who wish to make a statement after the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation did not feel it was possible to support the adoption of the resolution on applying sanctions to four Sudanese persons. In taking this decision, we were guided by thoughts we have frequently set out in the Security Council.

There is no doubt that the violation of international norms, including international humanitarian law, should not go unpunished. However, we believe that the present round of peace negotiations on Darfur in Abuja should be concluded by the Sudanese parties signing all the peace agreements up to 30 April 2006, as was determined by the African Union. In our view, there is the feeling that the adoption of this resolution might have a negative impact on the prospects for concluding a peace agreement within the time period and thus would not promote the efforts of the international community to establish peace and stability in Darfur and in the Sudan as a whole. We are convinced that, within the Sudanese context and also in broader terms, the implementation of sanctions should be closely linked with the task of promoting the process of a political settlement of the conflict and ensuring regional stability.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): In the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) we did not get clear and consistent evidence that would condemn those individuals in the way required for imposing sanctions on them in accordance with the Committee's measures and guidelines. We have frequently stated that we are ready to take note of any piece of proof available, as we are committed to the relevant resolutions and guidelines applicable within the Committee.

We are of the view that it is our duty to leave any such accusations to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to deal with and not to influence any investigations being carried out or that may be carried out in this respect.

This is why our decision to abstain was based on resolutions 1591 (2005) and 1593 (2005), as well as on the Committee's procedures. We consider the Committee to be the technical and legal specialized body entrusted with producing recommendations to impose sanctions.

In addition, given the positive report of Mr. Salim, African Union Special Envoy for the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on Darfur, and given the positive developments in the Abuja process, we thought that it would not be suitable to adopt this kind of resolution at this particular juncture and that it would be preferable to postpone the vote until after the end of the Abuja process on 30 April 2006. It is for all of these reasons that Qatar abstained during the vote.

Mr. Bolton (United States): We believe that this vote today constituted an important first step in the

Security Council fulfilling its responsibilities under the several resolutions respecting Darfur that it has adopted. This resolution demonstrates that the Security Council is serious in its effort to restore peace and security in the region and that, far from interfering in the peace process in Abuja, it will strengthen that process. We regret that the vote today was not unanimous, but we do not think that that will deter the Security Council from continuing to fulfil its responsibilities.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of China.

China has always been very careful about adoption of sanctions by the Security Council. Past practices and experiences reveal that, more often than not, sanctions cannot reach expected results. On the contrary, sanctions victimize civilian populations. Therefore, China abstained in the voting on resolutions 1556 (2004), 1564 (2004) and 1591 (2005). Just now, China abstained in the voting on resolution 1672 (2006).

More importantly, China believes that the timing for adopting such a resolution is not right. During the course of consultations, many Council members, including African members, repeatedly expressed such concern about the timing.

The African Union-led Abuja peace talks are currently at a crucial juncture. The top priority of the work of the Security Council in this regard is to assist the African Union in bringing the Abuja talks to a conclusion before the end of the month and to urge the parties to sign the package peace agreement. That is the priority for the African Union. It is also an urgent task for the international community, including the Security Council.

Approximately one week remains before the deadline. During this exceptionally important period, the Security Council should focus on the overall political situation and remain on high alert. If it takes any course of action, it should focus on promoting and facilitating, rather than affecting and interfering in, the peace talks. If, as a result of the Security Council's sanctions resolution, any party to the Abuja talks has second thoughts about signing such a peace accord, the conflict in the Darfur region will inevitably be prolonged or even intensify. The Security Council would have to assume responsibility for such an eventuality.

Like other members, China is very concerned about the situation in Darfur. China also hopes that the humanitarian crisis can be neutralized and the humanitarian situation improved in the near future. China supports the pivotal role played by African Union Mission in Sudan in stabilizing the security situation in the Darfur region. We also endorse the idea that those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights must be brought to justice.

The proper settlement of the Darfur problem will not only affect the security and humanitarian situation in the Darfur region, but also have an impact on the peace process between the north and south in the Sudan, on the neighbouring countries of Chad and the Central African Republic and on the subregion as a whole. On that critical issue, the Security Council should send a constructive message and avoid actions that might give rise to misinterpretation or even affect the peace process as a whole.

During discussions in the Security Council sanctions Committee, the Chinese representative joined other colleagues in requesting clarification of criteria for the inclusion of individuals on the list of sanctions. Regrettably, the sponsors and the panel of experts have yet to provide supplementary material. Sanctions should be applied as an extremely careful step. Before a number of specific details could be clarified and convincing evidence established, certain members requested the termination of discussions in the sanctions Committee and submission of the matter to the Council for action. Such an approach is at variance with the Council's practice of many years' standing; neither is it in accordance with the guidelines for the work of the sanctions Committee. We therefore express our reservations in that regard.

For those reasons, the Chinese delegation had no choice but to abstain on the vote on the draft resolution.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.